



DU PRE

du Pre' (du Preez) – South African History

Motto: "Pret por mon pays" – "Ready for my country"

The meaning of the name Du Preez is "man from the house at the meadows". The Du Preez family originates from the region between the Schelde and Somme rivers in Flanders. They originally wrote the name as Des Prez and also Des Pres.

The surname is in existence for more than 900 years. The earliest bearer of the surname was Lambert de Pre, born around 1050 and who was seneschal of Luik. His descendants inherited the surname. Another well-known du Preez was the famous Renaissance composer, Josquin des Prez, 1440-1521."

"The Du Preez ancestors brought with them something which, after 300 years, is still preserved in the Cape State Archives: the original certificate of church membership which the French Walloon church gave them as testimonial. No other South-African Huguenot family can today show such a testimonial.

Translated, the certificate reads:

We, minister and elders of the Walloon church of Vlissingen, certify herewith that Hercule des Pres and his wife openly professed the Reformed Faith and lived amongst us with increasing devoutness, attended the holy gatherings and participated in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion. We thus request our highly honoured brother-leaders of other churches to accept them as members of the church of Jesus Christ in the faith with which we signed this testimonial underneath our usual seal. Done during 'n church council meeting on this 11th day of the month February 1688 (signed) Lombard, Minister (Sign.) Daniel degroote, Elder on behalf of every one (on the church council)"

"Hercules, Du Preez (the South African progenitor), was married to Cecilia d'Atis (1650-1720), and died on 15 Nov 1720 in Soetendal Farm, Drakenstein, South Africa." On April 18, 1690, Hercules des Prez received 510 Gulden from the Dutch East-Indian Company. He lived on the farm De Zoete Inval. (De Soete Inval), in Paarl. The farm was promised to him in 1692 and formally allocated on 15 October 1697. Hercules died in 1695 where after Cecilia D'Atis married Pierre Dumont.

The "du Preez" children:

- 1) Elizabeth (born 1670): Marries Pieter Jansz van Marseveen (Marcevene) Children: Anna (marries Abraham Prevost), Cecilia (marries Charles du Plessis), Pieter.



Hercules des Prez 1691

The signature of Hercules des Prez. 1691.
(taken from old Huguenot records at the Archives in Capetown.) & the family crest.

- 2) Hercule (1672 - 9 May 1721): Member of "Hof van Landdrost en Heemraad van Stellenbosch", captain of the "Burgher Kavallerie". Refuses to appear in court for his opposition against Governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel. He is sentenced in his absence to five year in exile in Mauritius and a fine of £41 13s 4d. Certified incapable ever to hold a public or military position. Arrested on February 4, 1707. Released together with Adam Tas and other "burgers" shortly before departure to Mauritius. Sign his name as "des Pres". Married to: 1. Marie le Febre (Fevre) (1651-1701). 1 son and 1 daughter. 2. Cornelia Villion (Viljoen).
- 3) Marie-Jeanne (born 1675 or 1678): Married to Jaques Therand (Jacques Theron from Nismes) (1668-1739). Call her self as "from Bethun", in her will. 5 Sons and 3 daughters.
- 4) Francois-Jean (born 1677) Married to Marie Cordier. Two sons.
- 5) Jacquemina (Jaquimine)(1679-?) From Lille in Flanders. Married to Abraham Vivier. 4 Sons and 5 daughters.
- 6) Philippe (born in Kortryk, 1681) Fled from Bethuné, in Artois. Live on the farm De Klippenvallei (Klip Vallei), currently the area North-east of the sportsfields in Wellington. Allocated 1699. Owns also Artois and De Hoop in Land van Waveren below the Witsenberge, near Wolseley, in the Tulbagh district (both allocated 1714). He married Elizabeth Prevost in 1696 (born 1683, daughter of Charles Prevost: she came to the Cape from Marcq (Marck) near Calais with a brother and sister)."

If you want to research your own du Preez ancestry and how you are related to Hercules, Please email us (VITAE Online Memorials) at info@vitae.co.za or phone us on +27 (0)81 337 2812. We will do professional genealogical research on your family and provide you with a LARGE family tree that you can frame and cherish as an heirloom for generations to come.